

T O R R A N C E

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CITY OF TORRANCE ANNOUNCES BUSINESS AWARD WINNERS

Torrance, Calif., April 25, 2013 – On Thursday, April 18, 2013, The Office of Economic Development hosted the 6th annual Torrance Advantage Awards. Award recipients were recognized in four categories for their economic development strategies of local significance for the year 2012. In addition to a prestigious trophy, recipients received \$200 to help with operating expenses, a signed letter of recognition from the Mayor of Torrance, and certificates of recommendation from regional elected officials. In addition to the four categories, a special recognition recipient was also awarded.

*The **People to People Award** honors organizations for their excellence in enhancing employment opportunities in Torrance, commitment to employees, and investments in their skilled and talented workforce.*

Acuclaims, founded in 2007, grew its business model by investing in its employees using local resources such as the Pacific Gateway Workforce Investment Network's 'On the Job Training' program, and making an investment in the training of their employees. In 2012, the company experienced a 50% growth with signs of continued success. Acuclaims received the People to People award for enhancing opportunities, investing in their employees, and providing insight into the workings of a small business.

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Second winner is this category, Andes Florist, established in 1990, has depended on the referral of happy customers for their growth and sustenance as a local business. Their signature arrangements are uniquely designed with premium fresh flowers and signature details that only they are known for—making the arrangements something of an artwork. A small family business with a large clientele, Andes values customer service, timeliness, attention to detail and creativity. Andes Florist received the People to People award in recognition of their commitment to customer service, high caliber of their staff, and overall professionalism as a business.

Quality of Life Award honors businesses whose products, systems, methods and services contribute significantly to the improvement of quality of life in Torrance by serving the community.

Partner Assessment Corporation (aka Partner Engineering and Science, Inc.) is one of the nation's leading environmental due-diligence firms, assisting building owners and users to identify and implement best-of class energy efficiency solutions through green building and retrofitting. The organization put their own services to use by transforming a long vacant building on the edge of the downtown into a 20,000 square foot sustainable headquarters showcase, for which the firm is seeking LEED Silver certification. Partner Engineering received the Quality of Life award for its contributions to the quality of life in Torrance and for making a positive impact on the economic development goals of the City.

Second winner of the Quality of Life award, Pacific Skies Aviation strives to educate and inspire the Torrance community about the limitless opportunities general aviation provides, bringing the airport to the community through structured, nationally recognized organizations and new, innovative programs. Through their numerous educational seminars and community service programs, it is clear that Pacific Skies is passionate

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about bringing aviation to the community. Pacific Skies received this award for elevating the flight training experience through education, public outreach and innovative discovery programs, creating a partnership of trust that is revolutionizing the flight training industry.

*The **Enriching the Community Award** recognizes businesses for their excellence in contributing to the prosperity of Torrance through an increase in revenue and tax base.*

Strand Brewing Co. opened in 2010 in Torrance and has just recently begun bottling its beers for distribution throughout Los Angeles. After experiencing 100-hour weeks, no vacation or pay or employees, sales nearly tripled their second year, and the partners hired their first employee in April 2012. The brewing company has since signed with a distributor, Wine Warehouse. Strand hand-bottles all of the beer in-house, and their product is now served in more than 200 bars, restaurants and hotels across Southern California. Strand Brewing, Co. receives this award for their excellence in “enriching” the community and stimulating a microbrewery industry cluster in the City of Torrance.

Also enriching the community, Verengo Solar, the largest solar company in Southern California, is a national leader in residential solar and has helped thousands of customers convert to solar energy. The company’s trusted values gives its employees the foundation necessary for community staying power and green growth. Relatively new to Torrance, Verengo is showing rapid growth and continuously invests in their employees through on the job training and unlimited opportunity in career advancement. The company also gives back to the community by participating in various volunteer efforts.

*The **Long-Term Investor Award** honors businesses that have demonstrated excellence throughout the years with sustained success and commitment to investing in*

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the economic development of the community through partnerships, innovative strategies and continuous effort toward progress.

Convaid, established over 30 years ago, strives to create products that enrich the lives of special needs families by providing best-in-class, easy-to-use, convenient and attractive mobility products for all stages of a young person's life. Dedicated to helping families of special needs youth enjoy their freedom and lead full, active lives, Convaid works to understand what families, caregivers and consumers of their products need—optimal comfort, safety, mobility and flexibility. A steadfast advocate for special needs families, Convaid contributes to vital organizations and causes, and donates numerous specialized wheelchairs to a variety of programs. Their civic-minded employees also contribute to the community through their time and effort volunteering at local school events and by working on projects to improve school grounds. Convaid received the Long Term Investor award for being passionate about their craft and their long-term investment in making life better for young people and their families.

Our second long-term investor, Fox Drug of Torrance- “Your Friendly Neighborhood Pharmacy”- has been serving the community for over 25 years with prompt, professional service in a friendly atmosphere. This old-fashioned store may seem like a blast from the past, but with all the modern conveniences of paying utility bills and signing up for automatic prescriptions refills and delivery. Fox Drug of Torrance receives this recognition for providing the community with professional, courteous service in a good old fashioned way, and valuing customers while striving to keep the small town feel of the community alive and well.

*The **Special Recognition Award** recognizes businesses or individuals for specific efforts or show of excellence and leadership.*

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Capellino & Associates, Inc., 4th generation Torrance developers, built most of the red brick industrial buildings in Torrance where Pediatric Therapy Network is currently located, transformed the Red Car Depot into the Depot Restaurant, and built the Sartori office condo building where the South Bay Entrepreneurial Center is now housed. The Sartori building, which arose from a concept to give small businesses the opportunity to invest in the area, was built at the one of the worst economic times. Despite the hardships and obstacles, the building is currently in escrow on the last units and will be fully occupied in June. With sincere gratitude for their investment in the Torrance community, the City of Torrance honors and recognizes Capellino & Associates, Inc. with this award.

For more information about this event you can call the Office of Economic Development at (310) 618-5807 or visit www.TorranceCA.Gov/TAA.htm.

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